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ABSTRACT

The international area has grown as a field of graduate research in the past 20 years. Graduate students in adult education need to become more involved in international research both to stay viable as scholars and to be able to effect positive change in the lives of people in developing countries. The four main priorities in research in adult education are as follows: women's education; peace and human rights; environmental education; and literacy. These priorities often overlap and many collaborative research possibilities exist. In searching for grants for adult education research, however, graduate students should be aware that the term "adult education" is rarely used. For example, the World Bank does not use "adult education," but it promotes adult education in many ways--literacy, teacher education, training of all kinds, nonformal education, vocational education, and human resource development. Agencies that fund research are increasingly interested in collaboration among institutions in carrying out the studies. They are also interested in funding projects that result in empowerment of people in developing countries to carry on their own adult education after the projects end. Graduate students can conduct outstanding research projects without funding and without traveling to foreign countries. There is a need to document the international projects that are being carried on; such a study could be done with resources available by telephone and online in this country. Attached is a list of international research opportunities. (KC)

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Discussion of International Research Needs in the Field of Adult Education

by

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for

The International PreConference
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Kansas City, Missouri
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You will wonder how I have the courage to attack such a monumental task. I wondered about that myself, and obviously in these few minutes, I can only share a few ideas which may stimulate some discussion. However, I do have a deep conviction that the future of our profession hangs on global understanding and involvement and that graduate programs are still short-changing themselves and their students in this regard.

In the mid '70's I carried out a survey of the graduate departments in U.S. and Canadian universities and found that only about half a dozen of nearly 100 departments at that time had any serious international aspect in their curricula, and I should add that in most of those cases, it was an entrepreneurial professor carrying out some interesting consulting work. It rarely filtered down to instruction in the classroom. I took my degree in 1970 and during the four years of my work, there was no mention of anything international.

Ten years later, in the middle of the 80's, I repeated that survey with the help of George Reche, a VPI doctoral student from Kenya, whom I had brought to the University of the District of Columbia as a visiting professor. When he wanted to get a doctorate, we supported him to do his work at VPI since we had no doctoral program at UDC. In that study, we found a vast increase in things international. Almost half of the departments were involved in international work--student and faculty exchanges, or visiting professors, international conferences, publishing internationally, course work, and research.

I should think that if that study were replicated today, now again ten years later we would find that there would be few departments, if any, not involved. However, that survey should be repeated. The very act of making the survey stirs up considerable interest and provides the opportunity for the sharing of ideas and information. Right here, then, comes the first suggestion for needed research--related to our international curriculum itself.

But I am getting ahead of myself. I need to speak of the academic milieu which can generate international research. In the best scenario, global issues would permeate every course and all activities of faculty, staff, and students. It is strange that such a statement could sound excessive, but actually it really is not. Such important topical subjects as sustainable development, women's education and training and human rights, biodiversity, population etc. have a bearing on all the subjects we teach--history, philosophy, methodology, psychology, and program planning--for they are global as well as national issues.

To be sure, no department should be expected in itself to specialize in any or all of these fields. But students should be specializing in one or more of them, which can be accomplished by cooperating with other departments. Furthermore, adult education graduate programs should have a language requirement. Just for working in the United States, a student should have Spanish these days. Also, any graduate from our departments may well find her/himself at some point working in another country. Those with an additional language facility will get the most choice in career opportunities.

To tell the truth, I think adult education graduate programs have been behind the curve and we are paying a price in the annihilation of so many of our programs. If our academic tentacles are not reaching out comprehensively to apply our expertise to today's challenges, which are increasingly international, we get restructured out of the picture when funding is difficult. We have been short-sighted.

For example, just in the last decade we had professors decrying the new supposed "fad" of participatory research as not acceptable as a mode for dissertation research. I wrote many articles and talked about the importance of that concept. But aside from Budd Hall and Rajesh Tandon and a few others we did not run with the ball but left it to be developed by experts in related fields. And now today, the concept of participation has come into its own--participatory communication, participatory evaluation, participatory development. And little credit accrues to the adult education movement. Even the very conservative World Bank has accepted the importance of the concept. I hope it is now acceptable in all adult education departments.

And another thing. We have spent so much time arguing about the distinction between international adult education generally, and comparative adult education. How can there be any confusion? Before a student can reasonably carry on a comparative study, she/he must have some broader knowledge of the international field, not only in terms of her/his specific interest but generally. Otherwise the study will be full of flaws and probably invalid. So "comparative" is one method of international study.

International research is not out of the reach of students. When we try to suggest research on the international level to students, it has been my experience that it sounds like a preposterous idea to them. How could one pull up stakes and go out of the country when one is working and studying and has a family, when one speaks only English, and where would the money come from, and why should one make that kind of effort anyway when all one is doing is fulfilling credit requirements for a degree.

Today we know that with modern communication possibilities and with a bit of creativity and ingenuity, we can blow away all

those objections. The possibilities are so endless, it is hard to pick out just one example to prove the point.

But let me try something like this. In the book I have just edited, Adult Education through World Collaboration, (Krieger, 1995) one of the authors, John Comings, Vice President of World Education, reporting on the actual aid provided to adult education by the U.S. Agency for International Development, points out how little USAID actually does. Stacked up beside the reports from other countries, it doesn't look very good. However, there is more to be said, for actually there is much aid to adult education flowing out of this country, but it is through private agencies, not the government. It is not easy to get information on what is being done. A clever graduate student could make a wonderful research project out of this situation. Taking just the organizations and agencies in her/his own state, one could study the efforts made toward supporting many different kinds of adult education abroad. Mostly it will be called human resource development, or literacy, or teacher education, or peace education. We need to know not only how much and where, but today, more importantly, the philosophy behind the giving. Pardon me for mentioning my book again, but if you would read Paul Wangoola's chapter, you would get a very clear understanding that recipients abroad have very strong ideas about what kind of help they choose to receive and under what conditions.

In the case just cited, the student would not have to travel, speak another language, be absent from work or study and could do it even without any grant. It could be hoped that, after such an effort, the student would be so fired up that she/he would find a way, careerwise or other, to follow up on that study and visit the recipients of such aid and learn from them the efficaciousness of that aid. By that time, the student, now an expert, would have become a sort-after consultant for NGO's.

One way of addressing needs in international adult education research is to check out what the major organizations which provide adult education are doing and what they think needs to be done. I will refer to the World Bank, UNESCO, The International Council for Adult Education, and the International Development Research Center in Canada, the latter as an example of one unilateral effort.

Beginning with the World Bank, I can tell you flatly that they do not even use the term "adult education," even though they did once upon a time when they had a small adult education bureau or office. And even though they do promote adult education in many ways--literacy, teacher education, training of all kinds, nonformal education, vocational education, and most recently human resource development. We can't be put off by nomenclature.

From the World Bank, I have a list of very specific research needs in the field of literacy. I will mention them

just briefly here, but let me give you the reference so you can obtain the report. It is by Helen Abadzi and is entitled What We Know about Acquisition of Adult Literacy: Is There Hope? and was published in 1994. (report # 245). An excellent source of information. The author says, "If significant investment in literacy is to take place, substantive research is needed to understand how illiterates think, learn, remember, forget and act on information."(p.37) Her questions are endless. Let me just mention a few. She asks what cognitive processes adults marshal while learning to read. She asks about dropping out, socioeconomic variables, the relation to numeracy, characteristics of teachers, post-literacy experience, differences in use of literacy, self-concept of neoliterates, and problems of literacy institutions. She states that until now most research has been ex post facto, but what is needed is experimental or quasi-experimental research, data being collected from many countries and different scripts. She suggests a one to two million dollar project lasting perhaps five years. I don't have any knowledge about whether the Bank is accepting her suggestion, but if it does, there would obviously be many parts to such research and I would hope adult educators would be participating in it.

The World Bank is active in many areas of adult education even if they do not use the words, and adult education researchers should find ways to collaborate with them.

As for UNESCO, I would like to quote a paragraph from Paul Bélanger, Director of the UNESCO Institute for Education in Hamburg, Germany, from his chapter in my book mentioned above.

> The [cooperative] involvement of the UN and other multilateral organizations in the promotion and support of adult education, such as that of UNICEF and ILO, will grow even further during the present decade,...following a trend that can be observed at the national level, where many different noneducation-related ministries and nongovernmental organizations are also increasingly involved in adult learning activities. In such a context, both UNESCO at the international level and the adult education institutions in countries have to review their role, taking into account the changing political economy of adult education. (p.14)

Bélanger goes on to explain, "No more,...will it be possible for UNESCO to organize the Fifth World Conference on Adult Education in 1997 without other agencies,...without the participation of the different ministries and the social movements active in the related sectors of interests. (p.18)

If UNESCO and UNICEF and ILO and WHO and FAO are going to be collaborating in the various aspects of adult education, some new paradigms are going to be needed. Since all of these organizations already carry out adult education programs, new research proposals should be based on some sort of collaboration

with them. In so far as adult education in this country and internationally has seen itself as a neat little academic field, that day is gone.

The four main priorities of the International Council for Adult Education are: women's education, peace and human rights, environmental education, and literacy. While women's education and literacy have been priorities for some time, there is still so much to do, that they will be the subjects of needed research well into the future. Peace and human rights, and the environment are still comparatively new and almost everything needs to be done in those fields. Actually the four of them bear heavily on each other and many collaborative possibilities exist.

I wanted to include at least one bilateral governmental agency and since the International Development Research Centre of Canada has held a series of significant conferences in Canada and Africa about needed research, I will speak ever so briefly of that effort which was titled, "Participatory Development Communication." For me it is singing the same songs we who were promoting participatory research were rehearsing more than fifteen to twenty years ago. Listen to a couple quotes from their reports.

> Sustainable development efforts are most effectively actualised using participatory communication approaches which ensure that development responds to people's needs. More importantly, people's participation facilitates their acquiring full ownership of the development process, the key to ensuring sustainability of development programs. Participatory Communication has four common characteristics: people-centered; small scale; use of 'small' traditional media; and reliance on people's dialects. It emphasizes the empowerment of people; the nurturing of indigenous knowledge; culture and values.

and

> NGOs should schedule their gradual withdrawal from the communities right from the beginning to confirm the empowerment intent of their work.

I received copies of these reports from Eva Kupidura, Resource Coordinator for the ICAE, who attended this conference. However, if anyone wishes to get more information, it would be available from the IDRC at Siège social, 250 Albert Street, P.O. Box 8500, Ottawa, Canada K1G 3H9. The papers reflect research needs from planning groups in West and Central Africa. Since the IRDC does provide support for research, it would be necessary to write for their guidelines if one is interested in submitting a proposal.

There is one further concern I would like to mention related to international research, and that is the area of the Pacific Rim. The needs and concerns of that vast area are not necessarily new, but they are really topical now in government

and business arenas, and a wide open field for adult education research, and we have done so little. The possibilities are limitless--what about the new high tech thrust in education in Singapore, the decentralization of education in China, the privitization of adult education in Australia, the new graduate programs for professionals in Japan, open universities in Japan, and the educational needs of Chinese women who are now exposed to unfamiliar forces as the protection of the old socialist order declines.

Now a few random thoughts. Structural adjustment which the World bank and the IMF require of Third World countries has come in for much criticism in the past in that the heavy burden fell always on the poorest. The problem still exists and it still needs to be explored and exposed. What has happened to the education of adults?

Computer networks are developing so fast we hardly even know what questions to ask. Incidentally, I have appended a copy of a story from a college student paper in Boston which speaks to the possibilities provided by computer networks--not that you are not already heavily into it yourselves.

With millions of refugees in many parts of the world, how can their education be implemented and who is doing it? Some people are trying.

How many adult educators have received Fulbright fellowships? Who are they and what have they accomplished? Why have there not been more? I have also appended to the copies of this paper, a little bit of information about grants.

Why do we carry out research internationally? We used to have an idea that we could thereby be of service bringing our knowledge to the rest of the world. Now we know better. And we know that we have no choice, but to listen to the rest of the world and learn how we can all work together. International research is the responsibility of all countries and through it we learn about each other and share ideas for a better world.

College News Boston

October 1995

Tufts professor goes on-line to save time and money

MEDFORD, Mass. -- When Walter E. Rodriguez browsed the National Science Foundation (NSF) home page this summer, he saw that the NSF was seeking proposals for an $8 million research initiative in one of his interests: environmentally-conscious design, construction and manufacturing.

Then he realized that the proposal, which could take months to write, was due in three weeks. And it required researchers to show potential for international collaboration.

Undaunted, Rodriguez, who is the Berger Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Engineering Project Management at Tufts University, posted a slide presentation of his ideas on his own home page on the World Wide Web. Using Internet list services, he e-mailed hundreds of colleagues around the world who also work on ways to design products with an eye toward recycling their components instead of dumping them.

Before long, he heard from researchers at Vanderbilt University's Japan-U.S. Center for Technology Management, Sandia National Labs in New Mexico and the University of Windsor in Canada, as well as from Germany and the Netherlands. Rodriguez had created what he calls "a one-of-a-kind virtual partnership" among pioneers in environmentally conscious design, construction and manufacturing in the United States and abroad.

Rodriguez suggests that government agencies and research institutes would save millions if they instituted similar virtual research communication mechanisms. The Tufts team, he said, would be able to perform the NSF research for about $3.8 million, or less than half the available funds, thanks in part to the virtual research environment being developed for this project.

A log of the communication generated by the grant proposal can be seen on the Tufts Berger Chair's home page: http:// iv.cee.tufts.edu:8000/ berger_chair.html)

Rodriguez won't find out if he received the grant until next year. But he is enthusiastic about the advantages of generating a proposal completely on-line. "With a deadline of three weeks and all the parties involved, we never would have developed it in time with snail mail. It also reduced travel, mailing, telephone and printing costs."

"It was exciting to receive feedback from people interested in using the service while it was being developed. Thanks to the virtual research environment that we are perfecting, we have been able to continue interacting and will continue to work together, regardless of the proposal's final outcome."

OPPORTUNITIES

THE KENNAN INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED RUSSIAN STUDIES: SHORT-TERM GRANTS

Open to: Academics who possess either a doctoral degree or are doctoral candidates who have nearly completed their dissertations. For non-academics, an equivalent degree of professional achievement is expected.
Fields: Research on Russia and the former U.S.S.R. in the humanities and social sciences.
Purpose: The Kennan Institute offers short-term grants to scholars having a particular need to utilize the library, archival, and other specialized resources of the Washington, D.C., area. Grant recipients are required to be in residence in Washington, D.C., for the duration of their grant.
Deadline(s): 12/1, 3/1, 6/1, and 9/1 of each year.
Amount: Stipend of $80 per day.
Contact: Fellowships and Grants, Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W., Suite 704, SI MRC 930, Washington, D.C. 20024-2518. Tel: (202) 287-3400. Fax: (202) 287-3772. Internet: wwcem116@sivm.si.edu.
Applications submitted by facsimile transmission or electronic mail will not be considered.

FULBRIGHT INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS PROGRAMS

Open to: U.S. citizens who are full-time administrators.
Fields: Germany, Japan, Korea.
Purpose: Participation in short-term group seminars in Germany, Japan, and Korea for academic administrators involved in international education.
Deadline(s): 11/1/95.
Amount: Varies.
Contact: Council for International Exchange of Scholars, 3007 Tilden Street, N.W., Suite 5M, Box NEWS, Washington, D.C. 20008-3009. Tel: (202) 686-7878; Internet: cies1@ciesnet.cies.org.

FULBRIGHT VISITING SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM

Open to: Lecturers from abroad.
Fields: Preference is given to proposals in the humanities or social sciences, although other fields focusing on international issues will be considered.
Purpose: U.S. colleges and universities are invited to submit proposals for a Fulbright grant to host a visiting lecturer from abroad. The purpose of the program is to initiate or develop international programs at colleges and universities by using a scholar-in-residence to internationalize the curriculum, set up global studies or area-specific programs, or otherwise expand contacts of students and faculty with other cultures. Liberal arts colleges, community and junior colleges, and institutions devoted primarily to undergraduate education are strongly encouraged to apply, as are institutions serving minority populations.
Deadline(s): 11/1/95.
Amount: One semester or the full academic year.
Contact: Council for International Exchange of Scholars, 3007 Tilden Street, N.W., Suite 5M, Box NEWS, Washington, D.C. 20008-3009. Tel: (202) 686-8664; Internet: ciesvs@ciesnet.cies.org.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND EXCHANGES BOARD: SHORT-TERM TRAVEL GRANTS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND THE HUMANITIES♦

Open to: Faculty/Staff; U.S. citizens who have a Ph.D. or equivalent professional degree.
Fields: Social and Behavioral Sciences and Humanities; Russian and East European Studies; Mongolia.
Purpose: IREX offers travel grants for scholarly projects and activities including individual and academic research, presentations at scholarly conferences focusing on Central and Eastern Europe and/or Eurasia, and collaborative projects such as joint publications or comparative surveys.
Deadline(s): 10/1/95; 2/1/96.
Amount: Trans-oceanic Apex airfare on a U.S.-flag carrier and per diem for up to two weeks, not to exceed $100/day.
Contact: Lisa Lemair, Program Officer, International Research and Exchanges Board, 1616 H St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. Tel: (202) 628-8188; Fax: (202) 628-8189; E-mail: irex@gwuvm.gwu.edu.

SPENCER FOUNDATION HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS♦

Open to: Faculty/Staff, Post-doctoral (must be affiliated with an institution of higher learning).
Fields: Education, Social and Behavioral Sciences.
Purpose: The Major Research Grants Program encourages research that promises to yield new knowledge about education in one or another of its forms in the United States and abroad. The Foundation was established to investigate ways in which education, broadly conceived, can be improved around the world. The program supports individual efforts as well as collaborations within and across academic fields or methodologies.
Deadline(s): Anytime.
Amount: $1,000-$12,000 for periods of 12 months or less.
Contact: John H. Bancroft, Vice President, The Spencer Foundation, 900 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2800, Chicago, IL 60611-1542. Tel: (312) 337-7000; Fax: (312) 337-0282.

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